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SUBJECT: FRANCE SUPPORTS COPENHAGEN ACCORD, WORKING ON NEXT STEPS

REF: STATE 3080

¶1. (U) SUMMARY: France is promoting association with the Copenhagen Accord and is taking the initiative on next steps. The GOF is urging African countries directly, and through the Francophonie organization indirectly, to associate themselves with the Copenhagen Accord. The French are also working with the Norwegians on a "fast start" for the Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD Plus) initiative. The Ambassador will follow up on these topics with Environment Minister Borloo during their February 11 meeting. END SUMMARY

¶2. (U) In public statements, both President Sarkozy and Environment Minister Borloo have been strongly supportive of the Copenhagen Accord. President Sarkozy said that the Copenhagen Accord is not a revolution, but it is the start of a revolution. Speaking on January 27 before the parliament's economic committee, Borloo pointed out that Europe accounts for only 17 percent of greenhouse gas emissions, and that Europe's post-Kyoto goal was to attract the remaining 80 percent of GHG emitters. He added that, "if on January 31 the rest of the world sends to the UN their engagement on association and their plans for reduction, Copenhagen will be a success." Dismissing pre-Copenhagen hopes, Borloo said that "a European-style legally binding agreement with the rest of the world was nonsense."

¶3. (SBU) Both Environment and Foreign Ministry officials assured us that they strongly support the Copenhagen Accord, with which they associated through the European Union. They urged African countries to associate with the Accord, and also sent out an appeal through the Francophonie organization urging association. They worded the appeal to call attention to funds available through association without being blatant. The Elysee Palace advocated that the EU be aggressive in pledging a 30 percent GHG reduction under the Copenhagen Accord, but working level officials explained that the EU's ultimate decision to pledge 20 percent now, and 30 percent contingent on other countries' targets and actions was more realistic.

¶4. (SBU) To give greater credibility to the Copenhagen Accord's "fast start" concept, Foreign and Environment Ministry officials are already working closely with Norway on organizing a ministerial meeting on March 11 in Paris to give impetus to the Reducing Emissions by Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) PLUS program. The March 11 meeting will prepare for a summit meeting in June in Oslo, where funding will be pledged for specific projects.

¶5. (SBU) Governance of future Copenhagen Accord implementing negotiations is a question still under discussion, according to our French contacts. President Sarkozy had publicly proposed that the group of 28 countries in Copenhagen become a semi-permanent group with meetings alternating between United Nations Headquarters in New York and Bonn. However, this appears to be the President's own opinion, and has not been considered by the ministries. Our contacts pointed out that because the Copenhagen conference did not formally adopt the Copenhagen Accord, but only "took note" of it, there is an ambiguity about its relationship with the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol. French officials are wondering about the best

approach to dealing with the rejectionists' opposition to the Accord -- whether to ignore them, or try to co-opt them. They note that Cuba, Venezuela and Bolivia have scheduled an April climate summit in Cochabamba, Bolivia in April.

16. (SBU) On February 11 the Ambassador will be meeting with Environment Minister Borloo to follow-up on their pre-Copenhagen meeting. Post requests any updated guidance or messages that Washington agencies would like conveyed in that meeting.

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